

FORUM

History and Bunk

The Encyclopædists believed that men were passive, plastic products of their material environment. They never adequately explained how, if this were so, men were able to become conscious of the fact: or why men—including the Encyclopædists—acted on the assumption that the world could be changed through the instrumentality of ideas. But although they held with seeming inconsistency that environment was everything and man nothing, they had to endow the environment with the attributes the Christian grants to God. At bottom, it was a secular version of "What the Lord giveth, the Lord also taketh away."

F. Evans holds views which seem to place him in the same dilemma: actually two views, each incompatible with the other. The first is that men are merely circumstanced creatures of their technological environment, and the second that the sociality of man is innate. Mixing the two, he has produced a theory of permanent progressive evolution, a viewpoint first formulated by Herbert Spencer, who elevated it to a leading sociological principle. Society according to Spencer is "the study of evolution in its most complex form." Hence it would seem that biology is not a pre-requisite for social life,

but its basis. In this light, social development is merely the extension *ad infinitum* of a biological process. Thus Evans (in flagrant contrast to Marxism) accepts this mish-mash of eighteenth-and-nineteenth-century ideas of "the inevitability of progress." With the later development of capitalism, savants ridiculed this naive social philosophy. To social questions they adopted a highly tentative attitude in which the overtone on the theme of man's destiny was one of pessimism rather than optimism.

The whole trouble with such a theory as permanent progressive evolution is that, to be consistent with itself, it must assume ethical neutrality. This cannot happen in a society based on class antagonisms. Nor can it happen in a field of investigation—sociology—where value-judgments are a normative process. Again, if the concept of a strictly scientific evolutionary principle of social development must be one of ethical indifference, there is no necessary connection between socio-economic development and progress, anyway. In fact, this was pointed out to Spencer by many advocates of scientific evolution, of whom Thomas Huxley was one.

Spencer, who plumped for both scientific evolutionism and progress, was thus placed in a dilemma. He sought to get round it with the phrase "society is a development from the simple to the complex," in this way imagining he had preserved the idea of progress and kept, at least to some degree, ethical neutrality.

Evans himself, who in substance puts forward this idea, goes the whole hog and makes evolution and progress synonymous terms. He is, however, faced with the same difficulties. If his views are a strictly scientific evolutionary account of society, then he is bound to observe ethical neutrality. If, on the other hand, he makes evolution synonymous with progress—with all the moral implications involved in this view—he must concede that his is not a strictly scientific account. One would like to know how Evans reconciles the two; or, if he gave up one, which it would be.

It is not merely that he contents himself with saying that progress can and does result from socio-economic development,

but that he claims progress and evolution are identical aspects of the same thing. Thus, he is committed to a thorough-going teleology. Little wonder that he gives to what he calls the social progress the same attributes which the devout Mohammedan gives to Kismet and the practising Christian to Providence. Behind the flux of everyday events Evans sees a Purpose moving with the inexorability of the solar system, a Purpose majestically marching across the pages of history to its appointed end—Socialism. In actual fact, Evans's view is not a scientific account of social development at all, but comes in the category of revealed truths. For him, historical inevitability is but another name for the divine ordinance.

It may be as well to state Evans's social philosophy as clearly and concisely as possible, because he himself certainly has not done so. He holds the non-Marxist assumption that human society is an organism with its own inherent structure, like a plant or a tree, and so constitutes an integral whole. The systemized structure is then a functional co-ordination through which the ends of the process are realized: the ends are in the means and the means are in the ends. Society then, like any other organism, develops in accordance with its inherent constitution. That is what Evans means when he says Socialism inheres in Capitalism. Society may be seen from this standpoint as a kind of growth peculiar to the structurally organised whole. For Evans "society has no parts"; "that a given society is wholly property, wholly economic, wholly psychic"; "they are each the whole turned to catch the mind's eye this way or that."

If then we want to know what economics is, we are referred to science, art, institutions, psychology, etc., and if we want to know what institutions are we are referred to any or all of these other things. So, although we know what all things are, we do not know what any one thing is. Now, it is true that in any given culture-complex there will be found an interaction of the various activities of men. Nevertheless, when we speak of economics we mean economics, and when we speak of institutions we mean institutions, although in speaking of one term there is always

IN THIS ISSUE

THIRTY YEARS AGO.
Party Conference, 1925.

SEX WORSHIP IN THE
MODERN WORLD.
Is this the place of the Pin-up?

MARXISM AND LITERATURE: 5.
From Restoration to Revolution.

CUTTINGS.
From Liberal Party sources.

NOTES ON PUBLIC SPEAKING.
Concluding article.

The opinions expressed in FORUM are those of the individual contributors, and are not to be taken as the official views of the Socialist Party.

implied reference to the others. Evans says more than that, however. He says, in actual fact, the terms are completely interchangeable and therefore identical. This is nonsense. If he is merely telling us that society has always been institutionalized and that men have always carried on productive activities, it is the merest of platitudes. Or if he is saying that in any given social system the institutions and the productive activities cannot be separated but must be regarded as an interacting whole, it is gratuitous. What we want to know is how, in any given social context, these things are specifically related and how they operate. Evans never tells us this because his very assumptions preclude him doing so.

Because, in Evans's view, all categories are dissolved into relations, any one thing is but an aspect of everything else. But what are all things? Evans tells us social labour—and, of course, the converse. In short, his statement is a tautology. He thus transforms everything into an absolute subject-matter—social labour, which is both basis and superstructure, premise and conclusion, cause and effect. And so fondly believes he has transcended all dualism. Such a theory—if such it can be called—is incapable of empirical checks because it precludes any consistent analysis of things. It must be accepted as the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Evans does rather lamely admit that we see different elements in an interacting situation, but they are merely the necessary device of abstraction for mentally fixing the flux of change. Are we to assume, then, that wage-labour and capital, value and surplus-value are verbal fictions? That they have no existence outside the mind, no objective validity in any historical context? I for one would be interested to hear Evans's reply.

For the Marxist, of course, there are always elements in an interacting whole. The point is not to deny that these elements exist, but to see that their wider and truer significance can only be understood by bringing them into relation with something else. Thus we cannot in any significant sense understand religion or law in terms of themselves but only in terms of the part they play in historical succession, what needs they serve and what purposes they answer.

To say that things are related to one another in some specific way is to make a useful statement. To say that *all* things are related in an equally significant way is meaningless. Historical Materialism does not deny the separate elements in a situation but seeks to discover how they are specifically connected and how they operate. Whether the relations sought and the tools of analysis are adequate is, from this particular standpoint, outside the question. The procedure, however, is unimpeachable.

Marx's own theories, and he would never have denied it, have only specific reference to a given historical context.

They would not be valid outside that context. Nor are they true for all time. That is not to deny that certain features of his concepts will, in a more remote classless future, be part of men's intellectual heritage in the same way as some elements of Newton's theory are a permanent part of the general structure of physics—but only that. Only views like Evans's, starting with the absolute of social labour and ending with the absolute of social labour, can claim eternal truth.

In spite of Evans's high-flown, high-blown language, his underlying concept is meagre. To tell me, for instance, that *a* is an aspect of *b* is to tell me nothing. To tell me that *a* and *b* act and react on each other is to tell me little unless I am told in what crucial sense they do so. Even if we modify Evans's statements into a mere interaction theory, by saying that economics acts upon education which in turn acts upon economics, the statement—no matter how correct—does not grasp the real meaning of economics or education, any more than a statement that planetary bodies interact with one another discloses the nature of the solar system's elliptical course. This theory of interaction became fashionable Marxism among the leaders of the second International because it drained Marxism of revolutionary content and reduced it to vague abstract formulae.

For the reason given above, I find Evans's views on social development tedious and somewhat unintelligible. To underscore what I have already said, Evans sees the growth of a biological organism, determined by its own internal structure. He calls this growth "history," though it has nothing to do with history as ordinarily understood (except natural history).

It follows, then, that this growth being so determined is independent of men's will and volition. Society being what it is can only do what it does, and so virtually denies the proposition that, whatever the world may do today, human beings can make it something different tomorrow. Evans then denies any genuine human activity in social life. Even thinking cannot be exempt, for it must of necessity be rigidly determined like any other activity by the structural character of the organized whole. History—or rather, Evans's version of it—does not exist for man, but the converse. Men are merely necessary agents for a necessary developmental process. Eddington and Jeans made God into a mathematician and an engineer. Evans makes him a Marxist, and Historical Materialism the instrument of his design.

The only concession Evans makes to human thinking is that it can become self-conscious of the process going on, although he does not explain how the self-determined organic unity of the social process enables this to happen. Nevertheless, he thinks that by letting us in on the secret of the whole works we can pass it on to

others. In this way we can gracefully accept the inevitable and so march with the rhythm of events instead of being the awkward squad always out of step.

The Marxist view of historical progression is completely at variance with the assertions of Evans. It holds that men do make history, that history has no purpose which is not the purpose of men. It does not say, however, that this purpose is realized merely because men wish it. It even says that what men strive for in the way of practical achievement must be in line with the possibilities offered by a given historical phase: that in any situation there is a determinate social pattern in which men find themselves and to which they conform. In any historical situation then, what men strive for only becomes intelligible in the light of those elements which are given. It is only when objective possibilities are discovered in what is given that the concrete demands of men can be made effective.

What men can effectively will has, then, its roots in conditions which are not willed by them: that is, in the accepted social situation into which men are born. As a result, there is an interacting situation between the existing social milieu, men's needs and human activity. But it is human activity which is the transformative agency, not a non-human purpose. Men's needs are not something fixed. They grow along with the growth of the social productive conditions and constitute the drive, the dynamic by which men strive to turn the possibilities offered by the objective productive conditions to their advantage. Since the passing of primitive society, however, the needs of men have been class-conditioned. This is not a verbal fiction but an actual historic fact: I should be glad if Evans would attempt to disprove it.

Evans talks about a social unity, but a unity must have differences in order to be a unity, and these differences must be not verbally fictitious but objectively grounded. A unity without differences is nothing. Evans coquets with the dialectic, but fails to see that all contradictions must be real differences, otherwise development cannot take place. Actually his theory is something quite different. It is a scheme of abstract unhistorical evolution—the evolution of the simple to the complex by infinite accretions: a view which would have found no favour with Hegel.

Finally, in order to come to grips with Evans's views from an empirical standpoint, I propose to deal with his assertion that all human history has shown an ever-increasing technical advance. This is, of course, basic to his theory, for if society is self-determined then technology must equally be so. Indeed, technical development constitutes the main mechanism through which the purpose of the social process is realized. Again, of course, he must and does hold, in line with his

(Concluded on page 168).

SEX WORSHIP in the MODERN WORLD

"The possibility that a woman might become pregnant without at least one spermatozoon having entered the uterus is not one which the reasonable man would lightly entertain. Scientific opinion for several centuries has sided with the reasonable man; but today biologists, and psychogeneticists in particular, would be less dogmatic in dismissing such a possibility."

"Whether it is worth doing more in this matter than keeping our eyes open when we conduct a research that might reveal such a case, and awaiting claimants, is doubtful. But if such a claim were now made it could be proved. Possibly some of the unmarried mothers whose obstinacy is condemned in old books on forensic medicine, or cited as a curiosity by their contemporaries, may have been telling the truth."

The above statements appeared in an article "Parthogenesis in Mammals" in *The Lancet* on November 5th, 1955. One proven case would upset a lot of people, for it would presuppose the existence of many millions more unproved cases. Indeed, the implications are vast, both in the field of genetics and as a challenge to the Christian faith; so that now, even if the fact of the "Virgin Birth" were accepted, it would go on record as nothing very unusual anyway.

Imagine how this would be taken by the Roman Catholic Church, with its glorification of the Virgin Mary. A glance through H. Cutner's *Short History of Sex Worship* provides an illuminating study of the way the Christian Church has changed its attitude to sex. In the chapter "Sex in Christian History" we read: "There were many religious ceremonies, or at least ceremonies connected with religious festivals, in which indecency, to put it mildly, was part of the show."

The nuns also were quite capable of kicking over the traces. Many convents in France became famous on the strength of the debaucheries accredited to them. Cutner says: "To name but a few, the Abbey of Maubuisson, near Pontoise, those of the towns of Saintes and Trinite at Poitiers, that of Villemur in Albigeois, of Lys, near Melun, of Saint Catherine les Provins—all were celebrated in France for the intrigues of their inmates with Franciscan friars; and Dulaure, in giving details, insists that the debaucheries of the priests of antiquity were never greater than those of Christian priests. All this is admitted by ecclesiastical historians; and the fact that a long series of laws for over twelve centuries were promulgated to keep priests absolutely continent is proof enough of the difficulty in enforcing celibacy."

Now we read in the columns of *Stage*, the theatrical newspaper, on November

10th, 1955, of certain authorities who, while anxious to show how broad-minded they are, take exception to some shows in which nude girls appear. In their opinion, some of these shows exceed the bounds of decency. Dick Langley, manager of the Reading Palace Theatre, makes the comment: "Teenagers make up the majority of theatre-goers, and they want dance bands and nudes." As always, the customer is right. And we can't quarrel with that; after all, one has to eat.

Again, when it comes to nudity on the stage there are some interesting things in the annals of the Christian Church. The religious stage plays of the Middle Ages left nothing to the imagination. Adam and Eve were depicted in the nude before "The Fall." An extract from the Second Pageant of the Coventry Ms., in the British Museum shows Eve inducing Adam to taste the forbidden fruit; on perceiving their nakedness he says to her:

"Se us nakyd befor and be hynde,
Woman, ley this leff on thi pryvyte,
And with leff I shall hyde me."

This play was seen by numerous people with complete composure, for it was an accurate interpretation of the third chapter of Genesis and was portrayed as such.

The present cult of pin-ups is, after all, a form of sex worship. Recently the writer's home town was visited by a famous pin-up girl of stage and screen, and advertizing ballyhoo brought thousands out to watch her cut the tape and open a new store. In another part of the town an equally beautiful and certainly more talented young woman, a ballerina, was watched by a mere handful of people—the reason being that one conjured up sexual ideas while the other represented art pure and simple.

That is no discredit to the pin-up girl, but it does show how business has exploited the sex urge to make money. Until now we have an absurd situation in which products from barley-sugar to aeroplanes are advertized with pictures of semi-nude girls as, presumably, selling points. We have newspapers displaying full-page pictures of Hollywood lovelies in bikinis, and on another page conducting sham anti-vice campaigns: the articles being appropriately illustrated by pictures of a girl pulling up her stockings under a street lamp-post, or some other such illustration. Anyone with more than a little knowledge knows that the quick way of ending street prostitution is to permit licensed houses, but that is never mentioned.

Socialists know that sex is too deep-rooted to be denied; any form of repression, either by legislation or by stupid "taboos" (which are pagan in origin but manifest themselves today in the shape of conventions) is bound just like any other

sort of frustration to influence human behaviour until it assumes an importance out of all proportion to its proper place. The result in this case is sex worship.

Only when man becomes civilized will he treat sex in the proper way: something to be experienced, taken and given freely by mutual consent, but not to be worshipped or dwelt on until it becomes an obsession. Today, due to the property laws of capitalist society, such a situation cannot be. Only Socialism can supply healthy sex relationships as well as giving complete expression to all creative art and culture.

PHIL. MELLOR.

Thirty Years Ago

The following extracts are taken from the 21st Executive Committee's report to the Party Conference, 1925:—

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Adams, F., Adams, H., Banks, Brown, Brooks, Buxey, Collinson, Gostick, Griffin, Glucksberg, Gardiner, Higgs, Griggs, Merrison, Freeman, Fitzgerald, Hutchins, Godfrey, Uttin.

BRANCHES:

Branches have been formed in Leyton and Glasgow. The question of re-forming Paddington is still engaging the attention of the E.C.

CLASSES:

An Economics Class has been held at H.O. The attendance was so small that the class was suspended.

PAMPHLETS:

As a result of Delegate Meeting resolution, the pamphlet *Socialism and Religion* is being reprinted in preference to the new pamphlet on *Socialism*.

Twenty thousand have been ordered at £95, i.e., at one penny and one-eighth per copy.

The price of the Manifesto has been reduced from threepence to twopence, to take effect from April, 1925.

RESOLUTIONS:

(Manchester) "That the next Annual Conference take place at Manchester."

Amendment to above.

(Watford) "Add 'Subject to Manchester paying all expenses'."

(West Ham) "That this Conference recommend the E.C. to limit the Sunday propaganda to three stations, and concentrate on meetings at Clapham Common, Finsbury Park and Victoria Park."

MARXISM and LITERATURE: 5

"In every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch."
MARX.

Forever Amber is the book of the Restoration legend, wherein the monarch is forever merry and virtue forever in danger. For most people, seventeenth-century literature means the plays of Congreve, Vanburgh and Wycherley: comedies of bawdy manners, replete with fops, beaux, jades and mistresses.

In fact, there were only two theatres in London in the reign of Charles the Second, and when they amalgamated in 1682 there was only one. In the eighteen years when the Puritans had banned theatres, aristocrats kept drama going in their homes: that is how they made it exclusively their own and so generated the "comedy of manners"—their own manners. Playwrights and audiences were upper-class, seeking nothing more than to amuse and be amused. "It was," says Charles Whibley, "a life of pleasure and gallantry, which had a code and speech of its own" (*Literary Studies*). The theatre became the amusement of a caste: Puritans kept away and proletarians—nothing there for them, anyway—were not wanted. When they went to Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields at Christmas, 1662, Samuel Pepys complained:

"Not so well pleased with the company at the house today, which was full of citizens—there being hardly a gallant man or woman in the house."

The real commentators on this sort of upper-class life were not the playwrights, who made an uproarious game of it, but the satirical poets—Dryden, Pope, Rochester, and later Swift and Johnson. Consider first the age itself. In the history books it is the morning after the English Revolution, the struggle which broke mediæval absolute kingship. That was a pinnacle toppling as the done-for feudal structure crumbled, nearing its complete disintegration. Visibly a whole world, with its ways of life, sentiments, beliefs, motives and morals, was shifting for another. In a recent essay on John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, Professor Pinto says:

"One was the old world of mediæval and renaissance culture with its conception of an integrated theocentric universe and on earth of a sovereign at the apex of an ordered society with a Court consisting of his trusted

servants, who were representative of the accepted moral, æsthetic and religious ideals of the nation . . . Then there was the new world of what in the language of Spengler can be called 'civilization' as opposed to 'culture'; the world of the great modern city, of international trade and finance, political parties and newspapers with its atomized society of 'free' individuals and its Copernician universe of infinite space governed not by the laws of God but by mathematical laws which the scientists were busy discovering."

(*Essays and Studies*, 1953).

Thus, women and love had vastly different attributes from those they had in Shakespeare's or Thomas More's day. The mediæval "courtly" idea was of women either as dutiful, obedient wives or as the objects of courtly adoration. Commercialism needed something different. Engels says: "By changing all things into commodities, it dissolved all inherited and traditional relationships, and, in place of time-honoured custom and historic right, it set up purchase and sale, 'free' contract" (*Origin of the Family*). The upper-class marriage market had come into being, with convention, artifice and window-dressing—the wigged and powdered gallant buying a wife as a horse at the fair, and as likely to be swindled. Rochester commented:

"To the Pell Mell, Playhouse nay the drawing roome

Their Woemen Fayres, these Woemen Coursers come

To chaffer, chuse, and ride their bargains home."

There were big enough targets for the satirist in a society which paraded elegance, culture and grandeur to hide rapacity and ruthlessness. Simplest of all symbols was the fop who stank beneath his clothes (or his female counterpart): thus, Swift wrote scatological verses to point to the nastiness behind the glitter of the fashionable drawing room. And Rochester cracked savagely at the ideas on which an empire was to be built and every schoolboy spoon-fed—honour, bravery and fame:

"But Man, with Smiles, Embraces,
Friendships, Praise,
Inhumanly, his Fellow's Life betrays:
... Base Fear, the source whence his
best Passions came,
His boasted Honour, and his dear-
bought Fame.
The lust of Pow'r, to which he's such
a Slave,
And for the which alone he dares be
brave."

(*A Satyr Against Mankind*).

Primarily, however, the upper class between the parliamentary and industrial revolutions was more than pleased with itself. There was trade, there was money, and scientific—including economic—research proved what was already suspected: that this was the cleverest, the most prosperous, the finest ruling class that had ever been. It was Dr. Pangloss's "best of all possible worlds"—the one where the Vicar of Wakefield felt everybody's sentiments in the presence of the god Mazuma:

"Everything was grand and of happy contrivance; the paintings, the furniture, the gildings, petrified me with awe, and raised my idea of the owner. Ah, thought I to myself, how very great must the possessor of all these things be, who carries in his head the business of the state, and whose house displays half the wealth of a kingdom—sure his genius must be unfathomable!"

And at this point we come to the questions of prose, of language in general, and of the professional writer. Always, prose had been used for philosophical works, histories and treatises. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century preoccupation with science and politics gave tremendous stimulus to prose-writing; it was the vehicle for precise, rational expression in an age which had found need for precision and reason. Boyle's *New Experiments*, Locke's enquiries into thought and Newton's *Principia* all appeared before the seventeenth century was out. Scientific enquiry, in fact, was superseding poetic contemplation.

At the same time, there was the news-hunger created by the politics of the time

and starved by the Licensing Acts. They prevailed for thirty-odd years after the Restoration, aiming to suppress any opinion opposed to that mild counter-revolution by imposing a rigid limitation on printing. Therefore there were hand-written newspapers, made up and multiplied by an army of pen-pushers and sent all over England. When the Acts finally expired in 1696 there was a flood of popular journalism, with a new class of hacks knocking out the cheap, garrulous stuff which went down a treat in the coffee-houses. Ned Ward and Tom Brown were the kings of Grub Street: they had found how to Give the Public What it Wants.

The growth of prose-writing gave the final touch to the formation of the modern English language. That is how Dr. Johnson's Dictionary came to be—to fix finally the meanings and spellings of words to be used by educated people. Before the eighteenth century, even in the top drawer, spelling was a personal affair; but in 1750 Lord Chesterfield was telling his son:

"... that orthography, in the true sense of the word is so absolutely necessary for a man of letters, or a gentleman, that one false spelling may fix a ridicule upon him for the rest of his life. And I know a man of quality who never recovered the ridicule of having spelled *wholesome* without the w."

All this, of course, leads up to the prose novel. There had been attempts, which have been enumerated; to them may be added a few translations of French romances and a few imitations of them. There were the *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Gulliver's Travels*, but these were propaganda in story form, as were *Rasselas* and *Candide*. And there were Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*—the former an insufferable bore, the other the first of all real stories about real people. Defoe was a journalist, writing for money; he had the bourgeois belief in order and planning, and he knew that health and happiness needed a solid material basis.

The first novel, proper, is commonly held to be Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*. The claim to chronological first place does not matter: much more important is the fact that the novel as escape, as cheap sentimental fantasy, stems from *Pamela*. Its story briefly is of a servant-girl whose wealthy master has designs on her. For nearly three volumes she holds him off, until he adds marriage to his other proposals; with no cynicism at all, the book is subtitled *Virtue Rewarded*. Middle-class women—and their servant-girls—lapped it up. It was the humbleness-to-riches tale *par excellence*, the grandfather of every novelle and women's story since.

In 1740 the first circulating library was founded (by a dissenting minister). There was a flood of sentimental novels as the reading public clamoured for more like *Pamela*. The present-day reader may stagger a little before the unctuous, bare-

face materialism of Richardson's book, but it was in accord with eighteenth-century morals. That is not to say, however, that nobody saw the irony of it. Thus, Henry Fielding, aiming to make money from the new medium as well as anybody else, did so by handing a horse-laugh to *Pamela*. His *Joseph Andrews* describes Pamela's brother, virtuous as herself and exposed to equal difficulties—a footman, he is only too pleasing to his widowed employer's eye.

Richardson called *Joseph Andrews* "a lewd and ungenerous engrafture," but both he and Fielding went on feeding the circulating libraries. Mention has already been made of the length of *Pamela*; three volumes was, in fact, the standard length for a novel—sure guide to what social sections comprised the reading public. For the same reason, almost every writer's style was unhurried, his expositions long, his narrative leisurely. In a word, they were long-winded by modern standards because their readers were people with time on their hands; a mode of writing that did not change until the sudden growth of railway travel in the nineteenth century forced a new sort of style on Dickens and his successors.

Alongside its popularity, there was a certain amount of disapproval for novel-reading: it looked like a form of indolence, and a good many people half-concealed their addiction to it. Sheridan put a whole scene in *The Rivals* to satirize it as "an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge" and Jane Austen, even though her respectable family were "great novel readers and not ashamed of being so," published her books anonymously. Certainly until the Industrial Revolution the novel conveyed little else but vicarious emotional life. A good deal of the social life of the eighteenth century comes through better from its diaries and letters. Compare, for example, the bourgeois novelists' sickly sentiment with the Irish landowner's daughter writing of her own amour:

"Nevertheless she thinks it a good thing . . . to prove whether our Love is of an enduring kind or merely the result of Unbridled Passion. To tell truth, I do not care much whether our Love is unbridled or not, so long as we are permitted to satisfy it."

Diary of Cleone Knox).

As the last quarter of the century approached, however, change spread over all branches of literature. It was not the "reaction against classicism" beloved of literary historians, but something which came from society itself. The Industrial Revolution was taking place: the transition to capitalism was complete. Ideas of beauty and thoughts on humanity changed. The effect on visual art has been well described in Klingender's *Art and the Industrial Revolution*; the effect on literature was to produce the Gothic novel and, in poetry, the romantic movement.

R. COSTER.

EDITORIAL

Undoubtedly we were over-optimistic last month, and must ask our readers to extend their patience once more for a late appearance. We have, through nobody's fault, lost two members of the committee and are going to be shorthanded probably for the remainder of 1955.

There has been a welcome increase in the flow of contributions. This month the last instalment of "Notes on Public Speaking" appears. In the next issue a contributor criticizes the contentions made in J. D. Arcy's "Food and Plenty" lectures, and another gives his comments on "Stagnation in the Communist Party." E.W. puts forward some lively—and contentious—matter under the heading "Production and History"; and, of course, the usual other features.

It is too early yet for us to have had reports of the effect on FORUM'S circulation of its price increase, but we are optimistic enough to believe it won't make any difference. Just maintaining the *status quo* does not satisfy us, however, because we know how much room there is for our sales to increase. We ask all those who think FORUM worthwhile to make its sale a concern of theirs. An increase of 100 copies a month would be the biggest fillip we could have.

Incidentally, we would remind Branches that FORUM can and will advertize lectures, meetings and any other activities.

Contributions to "Forum" should be addressed to the Internal Party Journal Committee, at Head Office. If they cannot be typed, articles should be written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors are asked to give their addresses and the names of their Branches. Contributors intending series of articles should give an indication of the scope of their series, not send merely a first article.

CUTTINGS

from Liberal Party Publications

Conscription weakens our economy and industrial life, without strengthening our armed forces . . . While national forces are necessary, they must be ready to fight the war of tomorrow, not the 1939 war. The forces need technicians to use modern weapons; the history of Radar teaches us that modern military crafts can be adopted for civilian industry . . . Conscription only gives numbers. A voluntary system means efficiency.

Your Defence.

* * *

If profits are shared, why not losses? This is the most frequent popular argument against profit-sharing . . . It is true that when losses are encountered, they are borne by those whose function it is to risk money in the hope of reward, not by those whose function it is to supply labour only. There are nevertheless aspects of loss which touch employees. When a firm shuts down its employees lose their jobs and they may have to go far afield to work. They may have to change both home and friends. When the loss is temporary, some employees may be stood off; the shareholders may have no dividend, but they may remain to receive further rich rewards with returning prosperity.

People in Industry.

It must, however, be recognized, that in a great industrial community like our own it is impossible for the mass of the people to become "owners" in this sense. They are bound to remain "employed persons." On the other hand, if "Ownership for All" is to mean what it says methods must be found of providing them with opportunity to own—of enjoying "the saving sense of proprietorship."

People in Industry.

* * *

The result (of rent restriction) is that as fast as new houses go up, old ones are tumbling down or decaying into slums. This is a fantastic state of affairs, but in order to secure that the people shall be properly housed, the Liberal Party has proposed that landlords should be allowed to increase their rents by a reasonable figure, conditionally on undertaking necessary repairs. This would be a practical contribution towards Ownership for All, since as things now stand house-property in so many cases is becoming a liability instead of an asset.

Ownership for All.

* * *

To talk of the system we have described as 'syndicalistic' is nonsense. What it would

represent would be a moralised and transformed private capitalism, strictly competitive in character, in which employees would become investors too. Under such a system the whole outlook of the "workers" in the narrower sense would change. As employee-owners they would come up against the hard facts of industry, especially those of capital-supply. A self-regulating machinery would be established which would check any inclination on their part to resist improvements, to waste time or materials, or to pay out too much in dividend.

Report of the Liberal

Co-ownership Committee.

* * *

In the last election it was stated in Darwen—one of the cotton towns—that Woolworth's were selling Japanese shirts. Such a statement it was thought might be damaging to Woolworth's in the cotton areas. The statement was untrue . . . Liberals would have preferred it to be otherwise. They would have preferred that Woolworth's had announced that they accepted the view that it was to the advantage of the British people that foreign goods should be bought at the lowest possible prices.

The London Liberal.

HINTS ON PUBLIC SPEAKING (Conclusion)

The Use of Notes.

Before describing the method, I may usefully say something on the general subject of speaking from notes—that is, lecturing. While one may admire a speaker who can altogether dispense with notes, I do not consider it a sign of weakness to use them. When I have listened to some speakers, I have wished fervently that they had prepared notes and used them. Well-prepared notes are a wonderful aid in keeping a speaker to the point. Very few serious speakers dispense entirely with notes; generally, however, the better the speaker the fewer and briefer his notes.

Recording Ideas.

Having decided on a subject for a lecture, the first step is to read up all you can about it, so as to refresh your knowledge and make sure, too, that it is up-to-date. The next step is to break down this general knowledge into a number of specific ideas, each one representing some phase or aspect

of the subject. Then the ideas should be written on little slips of coloured card, obtained by cutting 5" x 3" index cards into six. These slips represent the different sections of the lectures. Typical ones: Opening, Centre, End. Assume, for example, that you have Red for Opening, Green for Centre, Blue for End.

Now obtain a number of white cards the same size as the coloured ones. On them write down all the ideas which occur to you for the first section. When you have no more ideas for that section, place the white cards in the appropriate section. Now begin to sort out these ideas as follows. Glance at your first heading and place further ideas as they occur to you, or points that will require to be dealt with, on more white slips. As fast as the ideas occur, pin them down in writing. When you have exhausted your ideas, move on to the next section, placing your white cards in order. Soon you will find your

brain jumping all over the place, and you will be thinking of opening, centre, end.

Continue to jot down ideas as they occur and place them in what you consider their appropriate sections. Whenever you come to the end of an idea-chain, go back to the first section and start again, and so on through the sections. It not infrequently happens at this stage that section-headings have to be modified and fresh ones added as the trend of ideas causes modification or amplification of the lecture. This, however is to be expected, as the whole thing is in a state of flux and all decisions are provisional.

When no more ideas present themselves spontaneously, the first stage is over. You have captured the ideas which were waiting to be called, but already you should have quite a stock of ideas noted down.

The Sorting of Ideas.

The next step is to go through the slips

grouped under each heading to check them for corrections of placing. Some are sorted into other more appropriate sections, a few may have to be destroyed as unimportant, not sufficiently relevant, or duplicated (it is not worth bothering about this when working-out ideas: checking slips when working on them tends to distract). This process of checking will suggest new ideas which are promptly written down.

Arrangement within the Section.

Next comes the beginning of the second big stage. Take the first section and sort the slips into some sort of order. At first the sorting can be a rough one into, say, beginning, middle and end, but gradually it will become more exact, and the ideas take on an appearance of logicity and sequence. This sorting will inevitably produce a large number of gaps, which can be filled in with fresh ideas. Any break in continuity can be remedied by the insertion of a link-up idea. In this way, the number of idea-slips will be very much increased.

A digging-out process is now begun and takes the form of constant poring-over the assembled ideas in search of flaws, gaps and weaknesses. The greatest attention should be paid to the actual arrangement of the ideas, and slips should be continually moved in order to find the best sequence. (This is the whole reason for writing ideas on slips of card instead of sheets of paper). All the time, ideas will keep cropping up that belong to later sections, and they must be noted immediately, before they are lost. It is very important for the idea to be written down at once.

As each section is provisionally completed, it should be carefully gathered up with the slips in their right order and bundled with an elastic band. The ideas are now represented by a fairly large number of slips, sorted into sections or groups and logically arranged within those groups.

Writing out the Notes.

One more stage remains: to put the notes into the most handy form for reference. This is a simple matter of copying them from the slips on to a sheet of paper, starting a fresh line for each separate idea.

It has been said above that the notes are arranged and re-arranged until what appears to be the best sequence is discovered. This is something which the lecturer must decide, and familiarity with the subject of the lecture will be his guide.

Methods of Arrangement.

Nevertheless, there are methods of arrangements in dealing with the material. There is, for example the Chronological order; again, facts may be set in order on the basis of Cause and Effect, or Logic.

A simple progressive order is obtained by starting with the simple, fundamental ideas and building up on them. There is also the order based on analysis.

It should be appreciated, in any case, that any order in which points are arranged is purely provisional. It is practically certain that considerations of expediency or clearness of exposition will dictate modifications when the actual speaking is in progress. It is true, however, that the greater the care with which the original idea-notes are sorted and arranged, the less will there be necessity for departure from them. A need for drastic revision or rearrangement in the delivery stage is *prima facie* evidence of hasty or imperfect note-making.

The two great fundamentals of self-expression are, of course, Ideas and Words. Of these, the necessity for an adequate supply of ideas is paramount. Given a well of ideas that may rise or fall but never runs dry, it is certain that words will be found to give expression to them.

The discovery of Ideas.

The term "idea" is used here to mean a unit of thought. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that an adequacy of ideas is indispensable to any worthy form of self-expression.

This need not be a disturbing thought. The insistence on a plentiful supply of ideas is not intended to deter the would-be speaker but to give him pause. If he has knowledge and the urge for self-expression, no shortage of ideas should be experienced. The knowledge is there, the ideas *must* be there—they merely need bringing to the surface. A certain amount of specialization is necessary: a more or less conscious laying-in of a store of ideas, as it were.

While one may obtain pleasure from meditation and self-communing, the practical utilization of ideas demands their communication to others. And the communication demands words—the tools of the public speaker.

Enriching one's Vocabulary.

The speaker whose brain is well stocked with words, which are the currency of thought, will seldom be wanting in ideas. One may not be prepared to admit that, of two men, the one with the wider vocabulary is likely to have the larger stock of ideas, in practice it will almost always be found to be so; for it is impossible to acquire an extensive vocabulary by ordinary means without at the same time laying-in a rich store of ideas, both concrete and abstract.

This thinking in words is one of the commonest habits of man, and *the study of the precise meanings of words is one of the best possible ways of developing powers of clear thinking.*

The need for a good vocabulary scarcely wants pointing out; it should be manifest. At the same time, some misapprehension may exist as to exactly why a good vocabulary is essential to the would-be fluent speaker.

Abuse of a Wide Vocabulary.

A wide vocabulary can be a vice instead of a virtue. Refusal to use a good simple word in order to exhibit a complex one amounts to the prostitution of a wide vocabulary.

The speaker should seek to widen his vocabulary in order that he may always have the right word at his command. Unquestionably the possession of a good vocabulary is indispensable to any worthy form of self-expression, for ideas can be debased, emasculated and rendered flabby feeble things by the lack of the right words. A speaker with a small stock of words can go so far and no farther. He has continually to be content with an approximate expression of his ideas.

The use of the Dictionary.

While a dictionary should be one of the most frequently consulted reference books, this is not the way to acquire an extensive vocabulary. The right way to discover new words is in their natural and proper surroundings—that is, in good literature. Words should be studied in relation to the sentences of which they form part. Their precise meaning, if not made clear by the nature of the words themselves and their contexts, must be outlined from the dictionary, but the acquaintance of the word should first be made in actual use. A detailed study of the dictionary is unnecessary, for the great majority of words in the dictionary are ones which are extremely unlikely to be used in speaking. If one's reading is extensive and a large portion of it given to subjects such as Economics, History, etc., words will be discovered which will be of the most value in Party speaking.

Exercises.

A very useful exercise to assist in the mastery of the precise meanings of words, is to take a passage from a good author and copy it out, omitting all the words which are in one's Passive vocabulary and also a number of important words. Put the copy away for a few days, then return to it and endeavour to fill in the omitted words exactly as they were in the original. And finally compare with the original, paying particular attention to the dictionary definitions of words which have been filled in wrongly.

Another helpful exercise is to take a passage from the leader of any newspaper and underline all the words in one's Passive vocabulary only. These should then be listed, and against each a definition written without recourse to the dictionary. Finally,

check these definitions very carefully against the dictionary.

These two exercises, diligently practised in conjunction with wide and analytical reading and plenty of practice in extempore speaking, will do much to enlarge the Active oral vocabulary.

Everyone has, of course, two vocabularies, to which are applied the terms Active and Passive. The Passive vocabulary comprises words *understood*; the Active, words *used*. The Passive vocabulary is the larger, of course, since we all understand more words than we use in our speaking. All Active words are also in the Passive vocabulary, and the Passive words are those which, while we understand them when we meet them, are not sufficiently familiar to be used in our speech. From these words we are getting only half value, then. Words may be added to the Passive vocabulary, but a speaker's aim must be to add to his Active vocabulary and transfer to it as many of the Passive words as he can.

Delivery.

These notes would not be complete without a few words on the act of delivery. The essence of public speaking apart from the quality of the subject-matter is audibility. In fact, audibility may be more important than the subject-matter, for it is not much use putting the finest exposition of the Party's case before an audience if one is inaudible. Audibility depends on two things—distinctness and power. This second term needs defining, but that must wait.

There is no substitute for distinctness of utterance in public speaking, and it must be acquired at all costs. It must, in fact, be automatic, a matter of habit.

There is nothing magical about distinctness: it comes with diligent practice. The secrets of distinctness are care in the formation of words with the palate, lips, tongue and teeth, and the avoidance of the common conversational vices of clipping and slurring.

Let it not be thought that what is meant is the mincing speech of the platform elocutionist. Say what you have to say in your natural voice, but speak distinctly, giving each word its full complement of syllables and honouring the vowels. A useful exercise for helping one in distinctness is reading aloud. Read slowly and distinctly, but in an easy, natural voice: read as though you were reading to a rather deaf person sitting a little distance away. Gradually increase your reading, until you can read aloud for an hour

without experiencing any strain. Start by reading aloud for five minutes, resting for five, and then reading again for five more.

What is meant by Power.

The second part of audibility is POWER. This is not easy to define, but it does not mean shouting. No public speaker with any training or experience shouts, even in the open air. By power is meant what is put behind a word enabling it to carry for some distance. When one speaks softly, very little power is behind the words. When one speaks to a person across a large hall, power is consciously used behind the words—but one does not shout.

Putting power behind words is largely a matter of breath control, and in this connection a quotation from an authority on elocution will be useful:

“Breath control in public speech should be so contrived that the listeners are never conscious of it and never feel that there is any limit to the speaker's capacity. Ignore the advice, so frequently and erroneously given, to keep the lungs fully inflated when speaking. Never take more air than can be controlled with perfect comfort, but take it before needed. Take a little and take it often, but always to the very base of the chest and preferably, though not necessarily always, through the nose. Draw the air in silently, and as it were horizontally, at the back of the nose. It should not be sniffed in, in an upward direction, with the aid of the nostrils. A noisy intake of breath is either the result of carelessness or want of knowledge. The speaker who has formed the habit of nasal inhalation has no use for the glass of water so familiar on the chairman's table at public meetings. Too frequent mouth breathing is undesirable because it has a tendency to dry the throat.”

Speaking Up.

If the speaker takes this advice literally and pitches his voice in a higher key, he may temporarily achieve some slight increase in audibility, but he is straining his voice and doing more harm than good. Don't speak up—speak *out*. Pitch your voice in a key which induces no strain. That will be the key in which one normally speaks in animated conversation.

Don't ring the changes on the voice: it is silly and tiring. What I mean is, do not vary your voice for the sake of varying it, delivering one sentence in a high key and the next in a low.

Do not drop the voice into inaudibility at the end of sentences—an actor's trick to gain dramatic effect. Your aim should be audibility, not dramatic effect. Do not let emotional stress cause a raising of the voice. Some park orators become almost frenzied, and their voices keep going up and down into the region of squeals. Listening to one of them, one expects the voice to go through the top of the head!

Gesture and Dress.

Avoid extremes of gesture. Let your gestures (if any) be natural. Some gestures, such as fluttering hands, are due to nervousness. So few speakers seem to know what to do with their hands. The secret is to keep the hands in repose. The best thing is to grip the top of the platform if outdoors, or take your stand behind a chair if indoors and hold the back of it with both hands (a quite natural position) until the first nervousness has worn off.

The both-hands-in-trouser-pockets is deplorable and should be avoided.

Let your style of dress on the platform at all times be suitable for the time and occasion. Remember the audience is there to listen to the Party's propaganda, and any oddity in the dress can distract them from what you are saying to what you are wearing.

The Outdoor Platform.

Outdoor-platform speaking is an art which can only be learned by practice. The requirements are a good powerful voice, PATIENCE, TACT, COURTESY and the ability to suffer fools, even if not gladly. And, too, the ability to apply your knowledge of history and economics to things as they occur.

* * *

It is my hope that these notes will have been found useful by one or two would-be speakers. Possibly, too, the experienced speaker will have discovered something of value. If that has happened, they will have been worth-while.

R. AMBRIDGE.

History and Bunk

(Continued from page 162)

evolutionary concepts, that this has proceeded from history's inception in a steady advance of productive and technical development—the proliferation of artefacts. This I deny, and propose in the next article to submit his evaluation to the test of comparison with what actually has happened.

E.W.